MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: October 22, 2015
Author: Sandra Singh, Chief Librarian
Phone No.: 604-331-4007
VanDocs #: DOC/2015/331087
Meeting Date: October 28, 2015

TO: Library Board
FROM: Sandra Singh

SUBJECT: 2017-2019 Strategic Plan Development

SUMMARY

This report seeks initial direction from the Board with regard to the process for the development of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan.

PURPOSE

This report is for decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the Board delegate CRPD to serve as the Steering Committee for the development of the next VPL Strategic Plan.

2. THAT the Board affirm the continued relevance of the Library’s current Vision, Mission, and Values.

3. THAT an external consultant be engaged to facilitate the Strategic Planning process for the development of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, with a report to be brought to the Board for approval at a future date.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The Committee discussed the report. It was clarified that CRPD as the Steering Committee would provide oversight of the process for the plan, but that the whole Board actually engages in discussions and decision-making about the plan. Clarification was sought regarding the scope
of the consultant and whether the consultant would lead or help with the community consultation. Committee Chair advised that it may be difficult for the consultant to lead the strategic planning discussions if not involved in the consultation process. The Chief Librarian agreed that having the consultant involved would be ideal and noted she needed to consult with staff with regards to capacity before confirming full scope. Committee members agreed that the Board Chair should sit on the Steering Committee; the Chief Librarian noted the Board Chair is included by virtue of being a member of CRPD. The Committee moved and approved the recommendations to the Board.

POLICY

The Library’s Strategic Plan serves as a de facto Board policy that describes the vision and a high-level service direction for the library for the duration of the plan. The responsibility for the implementation of the plan lies with the Chief Librarian, acting within the general policy framework established by the Library Board.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Library’s strategic plan provides an important roadmap for staff to follow in the provision and enhancement of library services. The plan enables staff to focus effort, shape services in response to plan priorities, and prioritize opportunities that arise throughout each year.

BACKGROUND

The Library’s current strategic plan concludes at the end of 2015. At its September 2014 Board meeting, the VPL Board directed staff to use 2016 to both complete any remaining items arising from the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan and as a planning year for the next three-year plan. The schedule recommended in the report and approved by the Board was:

2017-2019 Strategic Plan

- Community consultation: January to May 2016
- Staff research: January to June 2016
- Planning: September to December 2016
- Plan Timeline: 2017-2019

DISCUSSION

The original planning timeline approved by the Board identified December 2016 as the month for completion of the next Strategic Plan. Upon further reflection, it will be preferable to have the Board approve a Strategic Plan no later than October 2016, allowing staff two months to
develop an operational business plan for the same period. This would then allow the plan to both formally and practically launch on January 1, 2017 with operational plans in place. The period would also allow staff to develop improved approaches for measuring achievement toward the plan’s objectives. In order to present a 2017-2019 Strategic Plan for approval by early fall of 2016, staff must begin organizing planning activities in late fall of this year. Below are a series of recommendations to assist with the initiation of the process.

a. Planning Cycle

For the current strategic plan, planning stretched across 10 months of community engagement and discussion. This cycle, we recommend a shorter planning timeframe of approximately six months. This means that community engagement activities should begin by March 2016 and conclude with a plan presented to the Board for adoption at its October 2016 meeting.

b. Steering Committee

Last planning cycle, the Board struck an ad hoc Board steering committee that included the Chair and a CRPD member to work with staff to develop a staff-led, consultant-enhanced planning process. This cycle, staff recommend assigning the existing Community Relations Planning and Development Committee the role as the Board’s Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

c. Consultant

Given senior staff transitions in 2016, current senior staff do not have the capacity to lead the development of the plan as we did for the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. Staff recommends hiring an external consultant to lead the development of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan.

d. Scope of Planning Activities

As part of the development of the last Strategic Plan, the Board and staff engaged in exploration of the Vision, Mission, and Values of the library as the versions of the day had not been reviewed in a significant number of years. Given the library’s current Vision, Mission, and Values are only three years old and are still engaging and relevant, staff recommend these elements of the Library’s overall strategy framework are retained and used to guide the upcoming strategic plan.

e. City Archives

VPL has committed to the City to include community consultation regarding the Archives with this round of planning and to develop a Strategic Plan for the Archives alongside the Library’s plan. Consideration will need to be given to determine how to approach this process.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There will be costs associated with engaging an external consultant and with community consultation and research activities. A fuller budget will be scoped out once a consultant has been engaged and research and consultation needs identified. Source of funds will be the Library’s Reserve for Gifts and Grants.

Additional costs associated with the inclusion of the Archives in this process will be highlighted for the City.

TIMELINE / NEXT STEPS

Draft RFP for Consulting Services  November 2015
Steering Committee discussions re: inputs  November 2015
Staff discussions re: community engagement  November 2015 and December 2015
Issue RFP and selection of consultant  December 2015 and January 2016
Board approval of budget  February 2016
Development of environmental scans  January-February 2016 (TBC)
Community engagement  April-May 2016
Analysis of data  June-July 2016
Draft Plan  September 2016
Final draft for approval  October 2016

FINAL REMARKS

The 2017 to 2019 Strategic Plan will build on a successful period of transition and refocusing with the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan as the foundation. An updated Strategic Plan will continue to ensure that VPL evolves with changing community priorities and aspirations, advances in technology, and our dynamic information ecosystem.